

New Jersey Memorial Home, Main Building
524 Northwest Boulevard
Vineland
Cumberland County
New Jersey

HABS No. NJ-979-A

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6-VINLA,
1-A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

NEW JERSEY MEMORIAL HOME, MAIN BUILDING

HABS No. NJ-979-A

Location: 524 Northwest Boulevard, Vineland, Cumberland County, New Jersey

USGS Millville, NJ Quadrangle. Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18.497670.4371540

Present Owner: State of New Jersey

Present Occupant: State of New Jersey

Present Use: Administrative Offices and Recreation

Significance: The Main Building of the New Jersey Memorial Home is significant as an early example of the use of the Second Empire style for an institutional building. The building is also significant for its associations with the state of New Jersey's efforts to provide facilities for veterans.

Part 1. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Dates of erection: 1868; south addition 1902-1903; north addition 1907.
2. Architect/Engineer: Wrotnowski and Holbrook 1868; Thomas Stephen 1898.
3. Original and Subsequent Owners: Methodist Conference, ca. 1867-1878; L.D. Farr, ca. 1878-1884; Catholic Fathers of Mercy, 1884-1893; State of New Jersey, 1898 to present.
4. Builders, contractors, suppliers: William Allen, ca. 1900-1915.
5. Original plans and construction: None available.
6. Alterations and additions: The building has been altered, enlarged, and renovated many times since its construction in 1868. In the late 1870s or early 1880s it was converted for use as an oil-cloth factory. An addition, actually a completion of the original design, was probably constructed at the south end of the building ca. 1884 consisting of one bay at the central recessed section and a three-bay projecting pavilion. In the late 1890s the east veranda was raised from one to two stories and a two-story projecting portico added. In 1902-1903 a four-story nine-bay wing, with a two-story wood porch, was added to the south end of the building. An identical wing was added to the north end of the building in 1907. In the late 1940s portions of the building's verandas were removed. The remaining portions of the verandas were removed post-1975.

Minor interior alterations have occurred almost continuously since 1868. The present building retains little original interior fabric.

- B. Historical Context: The Main Building was originally built as a Methodist seminary on land donated to the New Jersey Methodist Conference by Charles K. Landis, the founder of Vineland. After various failed attempts to profitably utilize the building, the State of New Jersey acquired the property for use as a veterans' home. The Main Building has served as the principal facility of the New Jersey Memorial Home since 1900.

Since acquisition of the property the State of New Jersey has overseen the construction of the Main Building's north and south wings, and extensive alterations and renovations to the building. The Main Building represents New Jersey's twentieth century efforts to provide for the state's veterans and their wives and widows. The building served as a home for veterans

from 1900 until 1980. Currently the building houses administrative offices for the New Jersey Memorial Home.

Part II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Second Empire
2. Condition of fabric: Fair to poor.

B. Description of Exterior: The Main Building consists of a central pavilion with seven recessed bays flanked on each side by a projecting three-bay section. The central section of the building measures approximately 150 feet by 50 feet. On the north and south ends of this central section are identical nine-bay wings each measuring approximately 80 feet by 40 feet. The building has a raised basement and is four stories high, with a dormered mansard roof.

1. Overall dimensions: 325 feet by 50 feet.
2. Foundations: Stone
3. Walls: Local, rough-faced, random laid sandstone known as ironstone.
4. Structural systems, framing: Wood frame
5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: Original porches at the east front and north and south sides of the building have been removed.
6. Chimneys: Original chimneys removed.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: The principal entrance, centered in the east facade, consists of aluminum and glass doors set in wood frames. The doors are located beneath a roof that runs the length of the recessed center section of the building.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Windows in the center section of the building are generally nine-over-nine double-hung sash with stone lintels and sills. Windows in the north and south wings are generally six-over-six double-hung sash with stone sills and brick lintels.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Mansard roof with dormers covered with slate shingles.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Simple wood cornice.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Slate-sided dormers with wood six-over-six double-hung sash. A large cupola originally located in the center of the roof has been removed.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor Plans: Most floors have double-loaded corridors flanked by small dormitory-type rooms. The raised basement and first floor, because of their function as recreation rooms and office space contain rooms of various sizes.
2. Stairways: Concrete stairways and metal handrails in brick stair towers.
3. Flooring: Flooring on the former patient floors consists of linoleum over wood with wood baseboard. The raised basement contains both quarry tile and terrazzo floors. Office space is carpeted.
4. Wall and ceiling finishes: Painted plaster walls and ceilings on former patient floors. The office floor contains some panelled wainscotting and dropped acoustical tile ceilings.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Wood panel doors with transoms in wood frames.
 - b. Windows: Wood molding surrounds.
6. Decorative features and trim: No significant decorative features exist other than those addressed previously.
7. Hardware: Metal -- brass and aluminum.
8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Mechanical equipment has been updated throughout the years. No original equipment is extant.

- b. Lighting: Gas lighting originally illuminated the building and was converted to electric power ca. 1912. Building completely rewired in 1957. All original fixtures replaced.
- c. Plumbing: Plumbing system and fixtures upgraded in 1920s. Bathrooms modernized in early 1950s.

D. Site:

- 1. General setting and orientation: The New Jersey Memorial Home is located in a flat landscape principally devoted to agricultural use. The main entry drive leads from Northwest Boulevard to the Main Building, which visually dominates the site. Non-extant support buildings, including a laundry, carpenter shop, various storage buildings, and chicken coops, originally occupied locations west of the Main Building at the rear of the site. A superintendent's residence, constructed in 1925, is located off Northwest Boulevard south of the Main Building. Veterans' residences of relatively recent date are located southwest of the Main Building.
- 2. Historic landscape design: There is no record of a formal landscape plan for the New Jersey Memorial Home. At the west edge of the site a grove of trees with picnic tables and a gazebo serves as an outdoor recreation space for the residents. A cemetery, with headstones arranged in straight rows, lies to the west of this grove.
- 3. Outbuildings: An enclosed walkway connects the Main Building to the hospital, located immediately north of the Main Building.

Part III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- A. Original Architectural Drawings: None available.
- B. Early Views: On file at Office of the Executive Assistant, New Jersey Memorial Home, Vineland, New Jersey and the New Jersey State Library, Trenton, New Jersey.
- C. Interviews: Personnel, New Jersey Memorial Home, Vineland, New Jersey.
- D. Bibliography:
 - 1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Historical Files -- New Jersey Memorial Home. Various files held at the Office of the Executive Assistant.

McCresson, W. Rex. "The Story of Fifty Odd Years of the New Jersey Memorial Home for Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Their Wives and Widows." On file at Office of the Executive Assistant, New Jersey Memorial Home, Vineland, New Jersey.

Annual Reports of the Board of Managers of the New Jersey Memorial Home for Disabled Soldiers, Sailors or Marines, and Their Wives (1900-1952). On file at the New Jersey State Library, Trenton, New Jersey.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Cushing, Thomas and Sheppard, Charles E. *History of the Counties of Gloucester, Salem, and Cumberland, New Jersey.* Philadelphia, 1883.

Kellogg, D. O. *Illustrated Vineland.* Philadelphia, 1897.

Leiby, James. *Charity and Correction in New Jersey: A History of State Welfare Institutions.* New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1967.

Vineland: Its Products, Soil, Manufacturing Industries and Commercial Interests. Vineland, New Jersey, 1888.

Part IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This documentation was undertaken in October 1989 in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement between the State of New Jersey (Division of Military and Veterans Affairs), the Office of New Jersey Heritage, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as a mitigative measure prior to the demolition of the subject building at the New Jersey Memorial Home.

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